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Soviet Reported to Build Up Nuclear Arsenal

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WASHINGTON, June 25 — The Soviet Union is in the midst of nuclear weapons building boom that could double its arsenal of nuclear warheads by the mid-1990's if treaty restrictions are removed, according to new forecasts by Government intelligence agencies.

The report, to be presented to a Senate hearing Wednesday by analysts for the Central Intelligence Agency, says that the Soviet Union has made "major strides" in developing missiles that can travel by rail or road, with nearly a fourth of its warheads expected to be deployed in this less vulnerable way by

the mid-1990's.

The report also predicts that Soviet military spending will grow by four percentage points more than the inflation rate over the next several years, more than double the intelligence agencies' estimates of Soviet spending in recent years.

A Pentagon official familiar with the report cautioned that the intelligence agency forecasts "are projections, and when you get 5 and 10 years off, they can be fairly shaky. There's probably a lot of truth, and a lot of misinformation, in those estimates."

The intelligence report, based on the classified National Intelligence Estimate, an annual document distilled

from data compiled by all of the Government's intelligence services, is to be presented to an unusual public hearing of two Senate panels Wednesday morning.

Advance copies of the declassified version were sent to lawmakers and key aides today.

A Pentagon official said the decision to report on the intelligence estimate in a public hearing was approved at the White House and was designed to muster popular support for the President's embattled military budget.

Another Defense Department official added that the "bleaker picture" of the Soviet military buildup would help win public and allied support if President

Reagan decides to respond in kind to what he says are Soviet arms control treaty violations.

Report on U.S. Responses

The President agreed this month to abide by limits on the unratified 1979 treaty limiting strategic arms, but has asked the Pentagon for a mid-November report on possible American steps if reported Soviet transgressions continue.

Conservatives in Congress have long lobbied for more public reporting of intelligence data, saying this would counter attempts to cut the military budget.

The new report, in a statement that goes beyond previous estimates, says, "By the mid-1990s, nearly all of the Soviets' currently deployed intercontinental nuclear attack forces — land

and sea-based ballistic missiles and heavy bombers — will be replaced by new and improved systems."

The report added a number of details to the picture of Russian power contained in the Pentagon's annual publication, Soviet Military Power, released in April.

For example, the intelligence report forecasts that the Soviet Union will be able to increase its arsenal of nuclear warheads from the present 9,000 to 12,000 by 1990.

Possible Soviet Buildup

If arms-control limits contained in the 1979 treaty are eliminated, the estimate said, they could expand to between 16,000 and 21,000 deployed warheads in the mid-1990's.

The intelligence report said the "most notable" trend is Soviet empha-

sis on mobile missiles, which "represents a major resource decision" because such systems are costly to operate and maintain.

The new report says the Soviet Union last year embarked on an accelerated program for constructing new bases for its SS-20 intermediate range missiles, and that some of those bases were being converted to house new SS-25 missiles, a single-warhead missile capable of reaching the United States.

The Soviet Union is preparing to deploy the SS-25 this year, and the 10-warhead SS-24 next year, the report noted. The SS-24, as has been reported before, is to be put in silos at first and then based on railroad cars.